

WTC025. Typed Letter dated July 1943 from Alice Schwitzer in Budapest to MKS in London. Forwarded by Zigmund Deutsch in Portugal whose postscript is dated 23-7-1943. Top of letter (which could have given away the sender's location) torn off. Deutsch now writes he will emigrate to Argentina with whole family in middle of August.

Alice increasingly desperate for news from her children MKS and Jean, and begs MKS to write. She realises not all letters are getting through, but asks him to keep writing so one might get through. She was delighted to get letter from John Bolton. There are restrictions on travel, and tone of this letter is now that of someone knowing they may not survive and may never see their children again.

She talks about MKS finding a partner and asks him to be cautious. She congratulates him on his exam result and asks about his university studies.

She describes their life in Budapest in their rented two-roomed flat. There is some repetition here with letter 023 sent two months earlier, knowing that one or other might not reach MKS. They have rented out [their own] flat in Hlohovec.

Alice was 5 weeks in spa and says it benefitted her greatly. Anny relaxing in Hlohovec, but they cannot see each other, as unable to get travel permit. Alice wanted to visit her father in Hlohovec but has been unable to.

She relates news of other friends, and of her sister Boris's silver wedding. Their son George Polgar will soon qualify as doctor, though they are not sure what he will then be allowed to do.

My dear Matyi

Unfortunately I have not heard from you for a long time and although I last wrote to you at the same time as to Mucki [Jean Bolton], I haven't received any answer. I did get John's [John Bolton's] letter a few days ago, and that did give me an enormous lift. Firstly, he writes in a language that comes so easily to me and which I had no idea he spoke but which will be very important to me in future. I would never have been able to get close enough to him in a foreign language. And secondly, the news which he sends about you both is so good, thank God, and I am overjoyed to hear it. He speaks so affectionately of you in his letter that it warmed the cockles of my heart. I hope I am right to gather from this that you get along very well together and that is a great comfort to me.

Everything which he writes about you makes my life easier and the time spent waiting more bearable. Take good care of yourself, my dear Dicki [MKS, literally 'Tubby'] and stay the same person that you were when you said goodbye to me at the station. I am truly delighted that you are a great Don Juan,

as he informs me in his letter: you should not miss any opportunity to find love even if I am unable to surround you with it myself and it is left to others to do it instead. But you should be cautious in your choices: allow yourself to be loved but do not give your heart to anyone carelessly. I wouldn't mind if you found a worthy companion in life, although I am not sure that your means are sufficient to allow that and you have plenty of time for that! If no one special attracts you, enjoy your youth while you can without commitment. I know only too well that these are all pieces of advice that one only follows until life gives you an alternative and until your heart leads you elsewhere, but they can do no harm for all that.

Warmest congratulations on your exam result. But I want to know more about it. You were already fully qualified as an engineer so I suppose that this must have been some sort of doctorate. Is that right?

I am glad that you live near Mucki [Jean Bolton] and see them often. Stay close to each other and treasure your being at home together. She must have come on strongly as a cook and I would give a lot to be able to taste her cooking myself.

We are doing well and actually want for nothing really apart from your company. Uncle [Ernö Weisz] is still suffering a lot from his lack of a job, though little by little he is getting used to even that. And ever since he no longer suffers from his problems of digestion he is in a good mood and we wait together for a reunion with you.

We are still living in our little apartment [in Budapest] which is well located in a residential area and surrounded by green. My furniture is stored near where Anny is, and she is looking after it and I do hope that we will once again see all of our lovely things and enjoy them together. We have rented the two rooms here part furnished and added to it with some pieces of furniture from Uncle's [Ernö Weisz's] flat. The rest of his furniture we have added to the flat in my home town [Hlohovec] and have rented that out.

I have just spent five weeks in a spa in a beautiful location next to a pond/pool. I was in a room in the sanatorium under medical supervision and took the mineral waters. I was completely cut off from the world, read no newspapers, slept a lot and was absorbed in my own thoughts - so largely about you both. It did me a world of good and I feel fresh and healthy. A rest cure like that does wonders for my strength and courage

as well as for my health and I live off it for the next half year. I also had pleasant company and took pleasure from the beautiful countryside. Uncle [Ernö Weisz] meantime was at home and lived contentedly with our maid of many long years. Otherwise we are fine: we have good friends some of whom have Summer places in the mountains and some on the water and we visit them often to escape from the bustle of the city.

Anny has sent me a couple of photos of herself sunbathing in the garden and walking through the meadows. Just think of it: Anny taking a walk in the fields! That is how people change with time. I would like so much to see her but unfortunately they have been working for months to get permission to come here and have still been unable to get the travel permit despite both she and I having got all of the exceptions. I also wanted to visit Grandfather [Simon Szilard] and the children but there are also difficulties with that and Uncle won't allow it. And so we are so close and yet so far away from each other.

I told Jenö immediately about Juci's engagement. They were very happy about it and wanted to know more which unfortunately I was unable to tell them. I don't know much about our other friends. Artur is living here with Bubi, Franzi is well and running the business. He has a large milk depot and he is also another exempted case. He advertises everywhere and is much loved by all. Kato's mother is also here, Boris [Polgar] and her husband celebrated their silver wedding anniversary this week and I wrote a celebratory song. It was rather moving and funny. Gyuri [George Polgar] will soon qualify as a doctor, though they are not sure what he will be able to do after that.

Dear Matyi, I beg you to write me soon as did John. How know how much it means to me. Better that a few letters go missing. I also write many letters that never reach you, but then one or another gets through and that is more important than anything to me. I wish you all the very best my dear Dicki [MKS]. Think of me from time to time even as I hold you in my dreams and maybe in that way our feelings and thoughts will meet each other half way. I see you both in my dreams always as little children and it seems to me that in all this time nothing has changed even though by now you might have become strangers.

So my dear, take care, be well and God protect you. I embrace you and John and Mucki and kiss you with deepest love

1943.VII.

Your

[signed in characteristic mauve ink] *Alice*

[postscript by Zigmund Deutsch in Portugal]

I received a letter a week ago for your sister Mrs [Jean] Bolton and a few days before sent one to her for you. I hope these letters got through alright. Please enclose a return stamp with your next letter. I send you best wishes from my countrymen and high school colleagues and neighbour and hope to hear from you soon. I must tell you that I will be moving to Argentina around the middle of August.

Hotel Central, Caldas da Rainha (Portugal) on 23.07.1943

Your

[signed in navy ink]

Deutsch

(Please do not send letters to the Hotel Tivoli in Lisbon) but rather to this address as we will be staying here until we set off. Do you know the Horvat boys from Novo Mesto? Please send best wishes to them and to the others of our compatriots. I am particularly interested in those from around Hlohovec and Bratislava. I have been away for four years already. My wife and son are also here. My son goes to the English College. My brother Martin is also with us. We are all going to Argentina because I am in the wool business and I want to start a business there.

[signed in navy ink]

Many greetings
Deutsch